

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USINJC, IN, US

SUBJECT: INDO-US SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMISSION MEETING

REF: STATE 262173

SUMMARY: GOI PROPOSES WEEK OF JANUARY 26 FOR RESCHEDULED
S&T SUBCOMMISSION MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. LAST WEEK METZNER MET WITH RAMACHANDRAN AND DESHPANDE,
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, TO DISCUSS THEIR PROGRESS
IN PREPARING INDIAN RESEARCH PROPOSALS TO BE REVIEWED AT THE
JOINT SUBCOMMISSION ON S&T MEETING SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 9-11.
AT THAT TIME IT WAS EVIDENT THAT THE INDIAN SIDE COULD NOT HAVE
COMPLETED RESEARCH PROPOSALS TO SEND TO WASHINGTON BY MID-NOVEM-
BER FOR AN ADEQUATE REVIEW BY US AGENCIES PRIOR TO THE MEETING
IN DELHI.

2. DESHPANDE SUGGESTED THAT THE MEETING BE POSTPONED TO A LATER
DATE TO ALLOW DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (DOST) MORE
TIME TO DEVELOP 8 TO 10 COMPREHENSIVE PROJECTS FOR A THOROUGH
REVIEW ON THE US SIDE. THIS WOULD ALSO PROVIDE TIME FOR THE
ASSIGNMENT OF US EXPERTS TO VISIT INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE S&T
MEETING TO COMPLETE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE INDIAN SCIENTISTS ON
THE PROJECTS SELECTED FOR SUBCOMMISSION SUPPORT. DOST SECRETARY,
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MR. RAMACHANDRAN, CONCURRED WITH THIS SUGGESTION ADDING THAT HE

WOULD NOT WANT TO WASTE EVERYONE'S TIME BY NOT BEING COMPLETELY PREPARED. METZNER SAID HE WOULD CHECK THE PROPOSAL OUT WITH WASHINGTON AND LET THEM KNOW US REACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (AT THAT TIME HE HAD NOT SEEN REFTEL WHICH ARRIVED IN DELHI LATER THE SAME DAY.)

3. AFTER RECEIVING REFTEL, SCHNEIDER AND METZNER MET WITH NAG CHAUDHURI ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, TO FOLLOW UP ON THE PROPOSAL FOR POSTPONING THE DATES OF THE MEETING MADE BY RAMACHANDRAN AND DESHPANDE, AND TO TELL HIM THIS WAS CHECKED OUT WITH WASHINGTON AND THEY AGREED THAT CONSIDERING THE TIGHT TIME FRAME, IT WOULD BE BEST TO POSTPONE THE MEETING AND SUGGESTED DATES OF MID-JANUARY. NAG CHAUDHURI INDICATED THAT BECAUSE OF EXTREME PRESSURE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE PRIME MINISTER IN HAVING THE JOINT SUBCOMMISSION WORK PROCEED RAPIDLY HE DID NOT WANT TO SHOW ANY INDICATION THAT INDIA WAS "DRAGGING ITS FEET" ON THIS ISSUE. NAG CHAUDHURI DID AGREE THAT IN ORDER FOR THE MEETING TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL, A POSTPONEMENT TO JANUARY WOULD BE ESSENTIAL. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT KNOW ANY WAY THAT HE COULD REASONABLY APPROACH HIS SUPERIORS WHO HAD PLACED GREAT EMPHASIS ON MOVING AHEAD RAPIDLY.

4. WE SUGGESTED THAT EVEN IF THE INDIAN RESEARCH PROPOSALS WERE COMPLETED BY THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER, THERE JUST WOULD NOT BE TIME FOR THEM TO REACH WASHINGTON AND FOR OUR AGENCIES TO REVIEW THEM AND THEN SELECT APPROPRIATE SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS TO BE IN DELHI BY THE 9TH OF DECEMBER. CONSEQUENTLY, THE MEETING WOULD NOT ACCOMPLISH THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH AT THE OCTOBER JOINT COMMISSION MEETING IN WASHINGTON. HOWEVER, WE STATED THAT IF THE GOI DID NOT WISH TO POSTPONE THE MEETING, WE WOULD CERTAINLY AGREE TO STAY WITH THE DECEMBER DATES.

5. IT WAS FINALLY AGREED THAT NAG CHAUDHURI WOULD APPROACH THE MEA, INDICATING THAT SINCE INDIAN COMPLETION OF PROJECTS BY NOV 11 WOULD NOT GIVE THE US TIME FOR AN ADEQUATE REVIEW, IT WAS MUTUALLY AGREED THAT GREATER PROGRESS COULD BE ACHIEVED BY POSTPONING THE MEETING TO A LATER DATE. HOWEVER, WE STRONGLY REITERATED THAT THE US WAS AS MUCH CONCERNED AS HE WAS THAT HIS SUPERIORS NOT GET THE IDEA THAT THE USG WAS DRAGGING ITS FEET, BUT THIS SHOULD BE A MUTUAL DECISION MADE FROM THE STANDPOINT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF TECHNICAL FACTORS.

6. AFTER SEVERAL TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS BACK AND FORTH WITH NAG CHAUDHURI ON SATURDAY MORNING, DISCUSSING MOST CONVENIENT DATES, HE CALLED AND SAID THAT THE MEA HAD CLEARED THE WEEK OF JANUARY 26 FOR THE S&T SUBCOMMISSION MEETING. SINCE MONDAY, THE 26TH IS REPUBLIC DAY, HE FELT THAT THE US SIDE COULD ARRIVE IN DELHI OVER THE WEEKEND, ATTEND THE REPUBLIC DAY CEREMONIES,

AND THE MEETING COULD START ON TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 27.
WE SUGGESTED THAT A THREE-DAY MEETING WOULD BE ADEQUATE AND
AGREED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY THE US EXPERTS COULD PERHAPS
STAY ON FOR SEVERAL MORE DAYS IN DELHI TO MEETING WITH THE INDIAN
SCIENTISTS TO WORK OUT THE FINAL PROTOCOLS FOR THE SELECTED
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS.
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